

# Species Rich Hedgerows – Guidance for Farmers and Environmental Land Managers

Biodiversity and Ecology Team



Image rights -Diverse Countryside – Rhulen, Roger Key

WONDERFUL ON TAP



## Introduction and Objectives

We at Severn Trent understand the importance of hedgerows in the rural setting as an important resource and ecological corridor for a whole host of wildlife across Britain. Therefore, our new project is aiming at improving the state of the hedgerows across the Severn Trent distribution patch. We know that farmers and land managers understand their land holding better than anyone else, that is why we are asking for your help.

## What we can offer

We will provide a **100% supply and install** solution of all materials needed to reinstate and fill in any hedgerow gaps on your land holding. This **includes labour costs** (if desired) and will be delivered through our project partner Ground Control Ltd. Our main project aim is to connect gaps within existing mature hedgerows, which in turn will create connected ecological corridors across the landscape. However, sometimes hedgerows need to be extended or new hedgerows created, so while our main aim is to improve existing hedgerows, we are also open to your suggestions on how we can work together to improve hedgerows for wildlife.

If you'd rather undertake the install yourself, we're still able to provide **100% funding** for all the materials. For this option, we will purchase and deliver all tree saplings to your land holding, along with all associated planting materials (e.g. tree guard, and growing cane). We have sourced our trees locally from native stockists and we have vetted all suppliers to ensure trees are disease and pest free. We also can tailor your supplied species mix to ensure that generations to come will see a hedge mixed of species that were chosen by you.

We understand that farms have an operational need too, so where gaps in hedgerows are identified in fields used for grazing, we can include the installation of stock fencing in the areas you apply to have planted, to keep grazing animals from destroying the saplings. The type of fencing we can provide is subject to suitability and availability. We will only supply the fencing for the length of hedgerow being planted (as mature sections of hedgerow should no longer need protection from livestock). Should you need stock fencing, we will discuss this with you at the time.

## What we need from you

- Please fill out the form below with your details and the details of the hedges you'd like to improve on your farm
- Provide us with a map illustrating the hedgerows you'd like to improve, and clearly labelled photos of each hedgerow.
- Send this form back to us, along with the maps and photos detailed above to our Biodiversity and Ecology team – [ecologymatters@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:ecologymatters@severntrent.co.uk)
- On completion of the project we will need proof through 'after' photos of each hedgerow, please send these to the inbox above
- Works must be completed and 'after' photos sent to us by **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023**
- The saplings will require minimal management until they mature into an established species rich connected hedgerow

## Planting

Should you choose to work with us and opt to undertake the planting yourself, we would like you to aim to plant any gaps with a minimum density of four trees per metre when planting in a single row. Where double row planting is proposed, we would plant at a density of five staggered plants per meter (See Figure below, taken from Mersey Forest hedgerow planting guide).

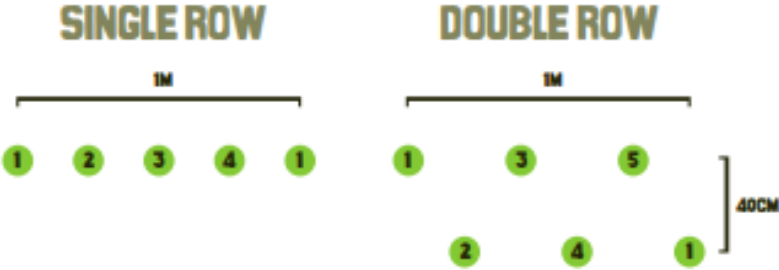


Figure 1: Example of a hedgerow we are targeting, © Copyright Christine Johnstone



Figure 2: Example project gapping up a hedgerow, © Copyright Natural England



Figure 3: Example of a fencing we would fund, © Copyright Pintrest

## The Small Print

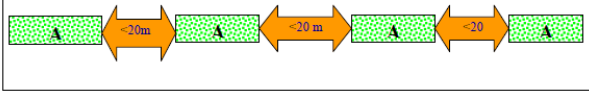
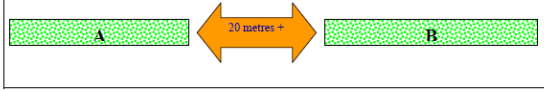
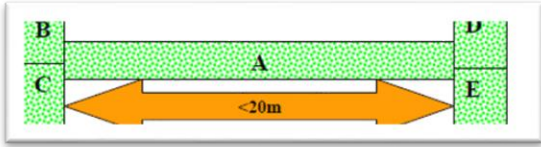
- We have assumed suitable soil conditions – No allowance for any testing
- We have allowed for soft dig only – No allowance for any hard dig conditions
- We have only allowed for rabbit protection only – No allowance has been allowed for any deer protection
- We have assumed reasonable access within 100m for a delivery vehicle
- We have not allowed for any surface finish (Eg, Mulch Mats or weed suppressants)
- We have not allowed for any ground clearance prior to planting
  
- By submitting an application, you are accepting the following conditions:
  - The work will be undertaken on behalf of Severn Trent by our contractors Ground Control Ltd.
  - Upon completion of the work, you are responsible for all maintenance required as part of this award and for ensuring that:
    - All legal and regulatory requirements are complied with and
    - All relevant regulatory permissions and/or consents are obtained and are complied with.
    - Any biodiversity improvements made through this project are maintained until at least 31st March 2025.
    - You will provide, upon request any evidence required to confirm ongoing maintenance is still taking place.
    - You will allow Severn Trent access to the project site to audit the work between project completion and 31st March 2025.
  - Severn Trent will be entitled to terminate this agreement and seek costs with immediate effect and without liability for the reasons set out below:
    - Trees planted are to satisfy any legal requirements you are subject to following the felling of pre-existing woodland.
    - Refusal to allow Severn Trent access to the project area on reasonable notice.
    - Providing false or misleading information.
    - Failing to provide project photographs.
    - Failing to comply with any legal or regulatory requirements.
    - Failing to obtain or comply with regulatory permits or consents.

## Aftercare guidance

Through the summer, remember to give your tree a regular water if it has been dry for a few days. If possible, try to collect rainwater in a water butt, or use your washing-up water, and also remember to water in the evening so it doesn't evaporate, and the tree has time to drink. Weed around the tree to stop the tree being choked and out-competed by weeds and replace the mulch when it is looking thin. Try not to use pesticides or herbicides. The tree will thank you for this as its needs mycorrhizal activity (clever soil science) to get the nutrients it needs.

Ongoing management of your hedgerows is required. Manage your hedges by:

- Trimming no more than once every two to three years
- Trimming in winter rather than autumn
- Restricting the proportion of hedges trimmed in any one year to a maximum of one third of the hedgerows on the farm
- Increasing the height and width of the hedgerows
- Continuing to protect them from livestock

Question	Your Answer
Farm Business Name	
Farm Business Address	
Applicant Name	
Applicant email address	
Applicant Preferred Contact Number	
Name of local Severn Trent Agricultural Advisor (if applicable)	
<p>How many hedges are on your land that contain gaps? If possible, can you provide grid references for each terminal end of the hedgerow?</p> <p>We measure hedgerows from junction to junction. A mobile phone app will be able to provide you with a grid reference</p> <div> <p>All parts of A form one hedgerow</p>  </div>	<p><u>Example</u> There are 3 separate hedgerows on my land holding that contain gaps. Hedgerow A starts at OS: SP83422525 and ends at SP43274829</p>
<p>A) Roughly how long is each total hedgerow length, including any gaps that equate to 20m or less?</p> <p>B) Roughly how many meters do the gaps equate to in each hedgerow?</p> <p>We consider gaps greater than 20m to be separate hedges</p> <div> <p>A &amp; B are two separate hedgerows</p>  </div> <div>  </div>	<p>A)</p> <p>B)</p> <p><u>Example</u> A) Hedgerow A (including gaps) is roughly 100m Hedgerow B (including gaps) is roughly 350m long Hedgerow C (including gaps) is roughly 45m long B) Hedgerow A gaps equate 10m of the entire hedgerow</p>

	<p>Hedgerow B gaps equate to 60m of the entire hedgerow                  Hedgerow C gaps equate to 5m of the entire hedgerow</p>
<p>Do any of the hedgerows require fencing to prevent damage form grazing? If so please detail here along with length of fencing required.</p>	<p><u>Example</u>                  Hedgerow B requires 100m fencing</p>
<p>Do you know the dominant hedgerow species present on an average 30m section of each hedge?                  The more detail you can give us the better. If you know what species are present then great, if you do not know, then leave this box blank</p>	<p><u>Example</u>                  Hedgerow A contains mainly ash and hawthorn</p>

***Please return this form, along with maps and photos (please make sure the map and photos are clearly labelled to match the hedgerow references used in the form above), to [ecologymatters@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:ecologymatters@severntrent.co.uk)***